

MRS. PIPER AND THE EMPEROR BAND OF  
"CONTROLS."

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(1) THIS paper is based on the articles about Mrs. Piper's mediumship which have appeared in the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, and on the typed records of Hodgson's sittings with her from 1896 to 1905 in the S.P.R. library. The Stainton Moses, Emperor, Rector, etc., of Mrs. Piper's trance are designated as S. M.<sub>p</sub>, Emperor<sub>p</sub>, Rector<sub>p</sub>, etc. The references to volumes and pages are to the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, and those to dates and pages with the word "Records" are to the books of typed records.

(2) So much has been written about Mrs. Piper's mediumship by experts in psychical research, that it may seem presumptuous on the part of a tyro to add to the literature. My excuse is that I shall restrict myself to a single problem—namely, the question of the identity of the Intelligences who communicated through her under the names of Stainton Moses and his controls Emperor, Rector, Doctor, Prudens and Mentor—and this point is one on which I may claim to have some special knowledge, as far as the internal evidence goes, owing to my study of the work of Stainton Moses.

(3) There seem to be two main difficulties in the discussion. The first is the difference in the kind of communication ordinarily received through the two mediums respectively, which suggests a difference in their methods and therefore makes it unsafe to argue from one to the other on the basis of analogy. For instance, much of the information which came through Stainton Moses is traceable to a printed source, with which it is probably connected, even if it did not originate therein. The unconscious exercise of clairvoyance may reasonably be regarded in

his case as an alternative to the spiritualistic theory. With Mrs. Piper, on the other hand, the alternative appears to be rather a form of telepathy. Another instance of the difference between them is the occurrence of physical phenomena at séances with Stainton Moses, which, by their connection with the automatic writing, tend to support the spiritualistic theory, whereas there were no physical phenomena with Mrs. Piper except the withering of flowers attributed to supernormal agency.

(4) The second difficulty is inherent in the spiritualistic theory, and consists in the uncertainty of estimating the degree in which the medium's mind may colour or distort the message. The application of this factor should not be strained to cover every contradiction or inaccuracy, but the only check on its use is *a priori* speculation, an unsatisfactory guide.

(5) For the present purposes I assume that the "Controls" or "Guides" of Stainton Moses were spirits with existence independent of his, and not merely the creations of his subliminal mind. I make a similar assumption in Mrs. Piper's case, to facilitate the comparison of the two groups, except in so far as the consideration of a specific alternative theory may clear the ground in some particular situation. The question to be discussed is whether her "Controls" were identical with his, and not who or what they were if the answer is in the negative.

(6) As the spirit of Stainton Moses professed to communicate through Mrs. Piper and to introduce the spirits who had controlled him on earth, it will be convenient to deal with his case first. He did not come without an invitation. Hodgson in *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. XIII. page 408, gave a short account of the sitting at which the subject was broached, and stated in a footnote that a more detailed account would be given in Part II. of his report. Part II. was never written by him, but the incident seems to be the same as narrated by Professor Romaine Newbold (W. R. N.) in Vol. XIV. pp. 36 *et seq.* On June 19th, 1895, the sitter (W. R. N.) quoted the writings of Stainton Moses in the course of an argument with George Pelham<sub>p</sub>, and at the next two sittings asked that

his attendance should be procured if possible. On the 22nd and 24th Stainton Moses<sub>p</sub> came and gave some information about the opinions expressed in *Spirit Teachings* and about the identity of his "Controls." He said that some teachings given through him in his earth life about the condition and practices of the spirit after the physical death of the body were wrong in certain respects. He accounted for these errors (Vol. XIV. page 40) as having been due to his misunderstanding the communications from his Guides in his earth life. This explanation is hardly credible, for the subjects were essential parts of their teaching. The only other theory that seems to me at all plausible, while consistent with his identity, is that owing to conflict with the views of Mrs. Piper or the sitter his replies to the questions did not come through properly. If either of these persons did hold strong opinions about the subjects discussed, a point on which I can find no information, this aspect is worthy of consideration, though the assumed distortion of the message exceeds the limits of probability.

(7) The information given by S. M.<sub>p</sub> at these sittings about the names of the "Controls" had not "the least semblance of truth" (page 41 *id.*), but the names which he gave are not quoted in the *Proceedings*, and blank spaces have been left where the names should be in the typed records of these séances. The original manuscript records are not in the S.P.R. office, but Mrs. Sidgwick has recently obtained the information from Professor Newbold and has kindly passed it on to me. On June 22nd, 1895, S. M.<sub>p</sub> said that Rector was Dr. Wallace, and that Doctor was his (S. M.'s) father. On June 24th he corrected himself, stating that Rector (not Doctor) was his father, and that Doctor was not Wallace but Walton, a "Dr. Walton" whom he had known at college. Then on being questioned as to who Imperator was, he gave the name of David, and on being asked whether he meant King David he assented, adding that he had written it ("David") in his script without divulging it to anybody. The names which these Guides gave to Stainton Moses are mentioned in paragraph 26 below. Stainton Moses' father

was alive while his son was doing the greater part of his automatic writing under the influence of these "Controls"; he took no interest in, and apparently displayed no knowledge of, his son's mediumistic experiences.

On a later occasion, October 14th, 1896, S. M.<sub>P</sub> stated through G. P.<sub>P</sub> that Imperator had been St. Joseph, the father of Christ (Vol. XXVIII. page 90). When G. P.<sub>P</sub> was told that this statement was wrong, a *soi-disant* Dr. Arthur Myers<sub>P</sub> intervened with the unsatisfactory allegation that Stainton Moses' father and not Stainton Moses in person had been responsible for it (pp. 91, 459 *id.*). S. M.<sub>P</sub> certainly was correct in stating on November 9th, 1896, "Records" page A.165, that Plato had been one of his Guides. The inclusion of so well known a person may have been due to guess work, and this presumption is strengthened by the fact that he mentioned Demetrius also on the same date, though no such name is to be found in Stainton Moses' books of automatic script or séance records.

(8) On February 17th, 1897, "Records" page 193, S. M.<sub>P</sub> said that for the automatic writing of his earth life he used to give each of his Guides a separate pencil. This statement was untrue. A pen, and not a pencil, was used in the books of automatic script, and the same pen was kept in use in spite of a change of writer. On page 273 of *The Controls of Stainton Moses* is an illustration of the pen being adapted to a remarkable alteration in the handwriting. In reply to Mr. F. W. Percival's questions, he made other mistakes about features of his mediumship. He wrongly mentioned hyacinth and lily of the valley as scents frequently produced at séances, and an opal instead of a turquoise as the stone especially brought for Mr. Percival, to whom I am indebted for these corrections.

(9) In matters not connected with his mediumship S. M.<sub>P</sub> was often in error. On April 2nd, 1897, "Records" page 15, Hodgson told him that Massey said that all his answers to Massey's questions were wrong. In Vol. XXVIII. page 97, Mrs. Sidgwick quotes what seems to have been a pure invention. He referred to an evening spent at Professor Sidgwick's house, though in fact he had never been inside the house.

(10) On a slightly different footing but equally unsatisfactory was his conduct in connection with his mother's death. She survived him, and died at the end of 1896 or early in 1897, while he was frequently attending Hodgson's séances with Mrs. Piper. He said nothing about her death, and thus missed a capital opportunity of giving a good test, as Hodgson told George Pelham, on January 19th, 1897, "Records" page 119. In reply to Mr. F. W. Percival, he said that he had gone to the funeral, but he could not give the name of the officiating priest, and he described wrongly the position of the grave, as I have ascertained from Mr. Percival, whose help I acknowledge with gratitude.

(11) The most important point in his favour is that he does appear to have furnished on one occasion "some private information unknown to the sitters, and afterwards verified in England, and well adapted so far as it went as an indication of identity" (Vol. XIII. page 408). Hodgson, who was responsible for this statement, gave no particulars, and Mrs. Sidgwick, who referred to it (Vol. XXVIII. page 98), could not discuss its evidential value for want of the information. She gathers "from the way Hodgson speaks of it that it does not go far to outweigh the many irrelevant, unplausible, and false statements which have to be explained away." This conclusion seems quite fair.

(12) The communications of S. M.<sub>p</sub> make a favourable impression on me only when he laments in a general way his inability to remember the events of his earth life, and describes in touching words the confusion of mind produced by renewing contact with the plane from which he has passed. His manner is then plausible, almost convincing indeed, and I feel that perhaps he may be the real Stainton Moses struggling vainly with elusive memories and incapable of expressing himself. This impression is obliterated as soon as he commits himself to details. Sympathy then gives place to distrust. On page 98 of Vol. XXVIII. Mrs. Sidgwick's opinion is recorded—"We must regard W. Stainton Moses as having failed to establish his identity." I would go even further and say that we are justified in regarding his claim as false, for in my

opinion' if a person still in the flesh made such a claim and gave such evidence in a court of law he would not only lose his suit, but would probably be prosecuted for perjury.

(13) Of course the failure of S. M.<sub>P</sub> reacts on the claims of his "Controls," Emperor<sub>P</sub>, Rector<sub>P</sub>, etc., to be identical with the "Controls" of Stainton Moses who used the same pseudonyms. In fairness to them, however, their cases may be considered on their merits without being prejudiced by the collapse of their sponsor, S. M.<sub>P</sub>. Mrs. Sidgwick, in rejecting their claims (see page 98 of Vol. XXVIII.), seems to have based her decision mainly on the communications made by S. M.<sub>P</sub> and by them in 1896 and 1897, several of which have been reproduced in that volume. The statements which they made about the names which they had borne in earth life, and the accounts which they gave about the characters of the Bible, seem to me too preposterous to deserve serious discussion. At any rate, if the latter cannot be proved to be false, though contrary to the contents of the Bible, they are certainly quite out of keeping with the teachings given to Stainton Moses by the original Emperor.<sup>1</sup> In this respect, however, there is one excuse to be made for them, as put forward by G. P.<sub>P</sub> on April 3rd, 1900, "Records" page 376, who said that they ought to realise that they had not developed properly when they talked this nonsense in the early days of their association with Mrs. Piper. There is really something in this plea. Whatever view is taken of their personalities, it is undeniable that the coherence, the thought and the diction of their communications at Hodgson's séances improved a great deal after the first half of 1897. Too much stress should not be laid on the early absurdities. Other aspects of the case should also be considered.

(14) There certainly is in some respects a similarity between their attitude towards Mrs. Piper and the attitude of Stainton Moses' "Controls" towards him, but perhaps

<sup>1</sup> One point not expressly noticed in Vol. XXVIII. may be mentioned. On March 10th, 1897 (p. 480 *id.*), Emperor<sub>P</sub> expressed a high opinion of Abraham, but Stainton Moses' Emperor on more than one occasion distinctly expressed a rather low estimate of the qualities of that personage.

no greater than we should expect to find between all good "Controls." In both cases they were very careful of the medium's condition; they insisted on the maintenance of a good state of health for the exercise of psychic powers, and they restricted admission to sitters in whom they felt confidence. Hodgson, in Vol. XIII. pp. 408, 409, expresses a very decided opinion of the success of their management; see also his letter to Dr. Hall, page 286 of Vol. IX. of the *Journal* of the S.P.R. At a later stage in 1910, 1911, they gave several warnings of the expediency of stopping sittings, declared their intention of withdrawing, and subsequently carried it out. This was on a par with the later stages of Stainton Moses' mediumship.

(15) To some extent the objects of the "Controls" of the two mediums were identical. In the case of Stainton Moses they professed to have a mission for the enlightenment of the world through him, and used his powers grudgingly for other purposes. Mrs. Piper's controls, to do them justice, may have had a similar object in view when they undertook to repair her organism. They certainly preferred teaching to tests, but in order to provide funds for the support of the medium they had to admit on payment sitters who wished to converse with deceased relations and friends. Keeping in view their favourite purpose, they insisted on sittings being allotted to a particular sitter, Mr. Z., on whose mission they laid stress. They seemed to take great pleasure in giving him instruction and preparing him for his duty. It seems unlikely, however, that Stainton Moses' band would have returned to earth again, or, having returned, would have remained, to be in charge of a medium who could be used so little for their main purpose. It is to me quite incredible that they would ever have condescended to give advice about investments after the manner of Mrs. Piper's "Controls" (see Vol. XXVIII. page 111; and "Records," June 27th, 1899, pp. 351 *et seq.*; June 29th, 1899, pp. 364 to 368).

(16) The teaching given to this sitter is sufficiently important to deserve notice in detail. On February 1st, 1899, "Records" pp. 75 *et seq.*, he was encouraged to consider that he had a mission in connection with the

Band, that he would be in rapport with them and inspired by them. On April 17th, 1899, pp. 141, 142, he was told—"a new light is opening through thy life whereby divine truth can be revealed to the world . . . but, friend, we see thee often lapse back into a state of questioning . . . We act with such as thee directly, with others remotely." On January 22nd, 1900, "Records" page 82, and on February 12th, 1900, "Records" page 153, it was said that, inspired by the Band, he would write for the benefit of mankind. He was not always responsive. For instance, on June 17th, 1902, "Records" pp. 693, 695, he abruptly changed the subject, interrupting the teaching by asking for advice about his own immediate needs. Apparently the Band were not always satisfied with him, for on July 1st, 1902, "Records" page 725, they said: "We love thee but not thy moods, they are not of the highest."

(17) The following extracts from the typed records will show the tenor of these teachings :

*April 10th, 1899, page 137* : "Thou art a part of God, the Spirit of God is within thee, we will bring thee into a higher condition than thou hast ever known." *Page 138* : "Cease to regret the past, pray to the spirit of calm and peace for power to control thy body." *Page 139* : "God hath promised us that we may remain until we have satisfied Him with our work." *Page 139* : "Thoughts cannot injure others, but acts can."

*December 26th, 1899, page 600* : "Finding God is finding a better side of one's self and living by it, listening to its promptings ; it is being guided by the higher thought, which *does* come from the infinite and all-wise Spirit ; the true Ego, the higher, better self, is a part of God."

*February 20th, 1900, page 177* : "God is spirit, we do not say a spirit, but *spirit* . . . All life is spirit."

*March 12th, 1900, page 286* : 'Struggling' in pursuit of knowledge is deprecated. "Work for it, but do not struggle. We do not know struggling here." *Page 286* : "Canst thou not believe that there is a power above thee, surrounding thee, working for thy development . . . Our power, and God's power, and our power is God's power."



*April 2nd, 1900, page 357*: "So long as thou dost put thy trust in the higher power thou wilt be relieved from physical distress: thine own mind has developed sufficiently to hold thee from doing aught but what is wise in this regard." *Page 359*: "This we state from absolute knowledge, as in communion with the all-wise God; He has sent us as His prophets."

*April 16th, 1900, page 401*: When Paul prayed for those in prison he meant "those in the imprisoning body."

*May 22nd, 1900, page 428*: "God doth prompt the spirit and if the spirit doth listen and wait for this prompting it will never be misled."

*April 3rd, 1901, pp. 251, 252, an example of prayer*: "Oh God, I am conscious that I am of Thee a part . . . Give me light through my spirit, which is a part of Thee." *Page 252*: "Become perfectly passive and calm, holding thy spirit in communion with God."

*June 17th, 1902, page 692*: "If thou dost ask for help in thy work, thy writing, I should be conscious of that the instant thou dost wish it; therefore my power is of God and far-reaching, and the thought which we convey to thee spiritually is a part of the one great thought in the universe, God-like thought and the thought of God." *Page 693*: "What doth seem to thee wise and reasonable to pray for, pray for it in perfect faith that it is for thee, and thou wilt surely receive some recognition of thy prayer."

*July 1st, 1902, page 723*: "Relax into a state of peace with thyself." *Page 723*: "Live out of self more, and receive the great peace of the great spirit friend. Do this by relaxation and not by fighting. . . . Seek within thyself for greater peace."

*January 5th, 1903, page 3*: "We do not speak of the Infinite as a spirit but as *spirit*." *Page 4*: "The Infinite in His own wise way doth work many miracles on the earthly side of life. And He hath sent His messengers." *Page 6*: "Thou shalt know thyself and to know thyself is to be free." *Page 8*: "Have faith and patience to place thyself in God's hands and in ours also, as we are a part of Him."

*January 18th, 1904, page 73:* "Relaxing and leaving it to the Great Thought," is commended as better than auto-suggestion.

*March 8th, 1904, page 392:* "He [God] is the life from which life comes, the One, the Whole, the Life of man. The body is *nothing*, it is the suit of clothes, keep it clean, keep it whole, in the thought that the spirit is the man and the reflection of God."

*April 5th, 1904, page 560A:* "God is the intelligence that is not personal."

(18) It is a pity that there is no such complete record of this teaching as there is for Stainton Moses' automatic writing. For almost all the sittings, owing to Hodgson's absence, Mr. Z.'s notes are the only record. Sometimes there is no record, either because the communications were treated as private and confidential, or because they were made by word of mouth instead of being written, and were spoken too quickly to be taken down. The notes seem rarely to be more than fragmentary. Perhaps if there were a complete record the instructions would be more satisfying than what is embodied in the notes, and there would not be so many gaps and unfulfilled promises of imparting knowledge.

(19) It is noticeable that two ideas of God run through the discourses. One is that God is the all-pervading spirit of which man's spirit is a part. The other is the anthropomorphic conception of a supreme personality who has commissioned the Band as his agents. Illustrations of both conceptions are to be found in the extracts quoted above. The following passages, taken from communications addressed to Mr. Z. and other sitters, are quoted below to bring out the anthropomorphic conception more fully:

*April 30th, 1900, page 408:* "He [Imperator] is next to the All-wise."

*March 4th, 1901, page 175:* "God hath most profoundly stated that under our guidance all will end well."

*April 18th, 1901, page 331:* "Per order from the Most High through His Messenger † Imperator."

January 23rd, 1905, page 153: "We do know and God hath promised us greater knowledge of the conditions surrounding him [S]."

April 26th, 1905, page 742: "We do not see Him [God], but we feel Him."

(20) The inconsistency between the two conceptions of God is hard to understand, but speculation about the origins of the two conflicting ideas is outside the scope of the present article. It is sufficient to say that neither conception is suggestive of the attitude of Stainton Moses' Guides. The level of their teaching may not have been above the best productions of Mrs. Piper's "Controls," but it was on different lines—the truth to be found in all religions, the consequences entailed by actions, the fallacy of the popular doctrine of the Atonement, the discussion of Reincarnation and the "Occult." Imperator<sub>P</sub> is practically silent on the subject of Biblical history during this phase of teaching, and does not refer to his own dependence on Elijah when he mentions his mission, two points which were very prominent in the messages of Stainton Moses' principal Guide. It is true that the original Imperator did claim that his mission was part of a movement under the leadership of Jesus, but he never ventured to claim the close connection with God which Imperator<sub>P</sub> asserts.

(21) Miss Newton, the Secretary of the Society for Psychological Research, to whom I mentioned the principal lines of the teaching given by Imperator<sub>P</sub>, suggested that the ideas might be found in Dresser's *The Power of Silence*, London, 1898, which in her opinion Mrs. Piper had probably read. A perusal of that book shows considerable similarity between its contents and the thoughts expressed by Mrs. Piper's Band. Ideas of this kind were much in the air at that period, and there is nothing improbable in the theory that the subject-matter of the teaching may have come from the mind of the medium or the sitter. Rector<sub>P</sub> said on March 20th, 1905, "Records" page 492, that the Band took their words but not their thoughts from the sitters' minds, a statement which may point to their dependence on the sitters' knowledge for the subject matter

of their messages, though they limit their obligation to verbal expression.

(22) This is a convenient place to mention some replies given by Mrs. Piper's "Controls" to Dr. Savage's questions about the nature of Jesus. On January 14th, 1903, page 36, Dr. Savage was told by the communicating spirit, his deceased son "Phil," that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary. Rector corrected Phil immediately, stating that Jesus was the "Son of God" . . . "born of Mary in the body but not as other mortals." Rector went on to say that Jesus was not God or to be worshipped as God, but was the son of Joseph, that He existed before birth and was reincarnated. Rector then declared that God was never visible in the spirit world, and was spirit, not a spirit, thus returning to what had been told to Mr. Z. on January 5th, 1903. He went on to say that Christ was the only mortal or spirit who was reincarnated, but admitted, when reminded of the Band's earlier teaching about Melchizedek, that Melchizedek had also been reincarnated. Then, apparently to explain the contradiction, he added that Christ (Jesus) was the only Christ who had been reincarnated. These statements will be found in pp. 37 to 40 of the typed records for January 14th, 1903. The denial of the divinity of Jesus corresponds with the teaching of Stainton Moses' Guides; but the agreement on this point is not a striking coincidence, for it is an opinion held by many people, and the confusion and contradiction, as contrasted with the reasoned arguments of Stainton Moses' Imperator, deprive the incident of any weight as a proof of identity. On May 5th, 1903, "Records" page 514, Mr. Z. was again told that Christ as well as Melchizedek was a reincarnation.

(23) There are some minor points which deserve notice as bearing on the question of the identity of the "Controls" of the two mediums. Those which are favourable to the claim of Mrs. Piper's Band will first be discussed.

(a) There is some resemblance in the religious atmosphere which surrounds each band, especially marked in their frequent prayers. It is possible, however, that in Mrs. Piper's case this trait may have been imitated, for Hodgson

explained to her Emperor's relation with Stainton Moses, and gave her a copy of *Spirit Teachings* to read (Vol. XXVIII. page 100). The style of the prayers in her script may have been borrowed from that source; the expression "All-wise" used by her occurs there too. That book was also familiar to Hodgson, no doubt.

(b) The serious characters of Emperor<sub>p</sub> and Rector<sub>p</sub>, and the deference paid to the former by the latter as described by Hyslop in Vol. XVI. page 181, agree with the traits of the "Controls" of Stainton Moses bearing the same names. It is possible, of course, that the dramatisation or personation was based on the contents of *Spirit Teachings*, or even on Myers' articles in Vols. IX. and XI. of the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R., with which the sitter was probably familiar.

(c) Mr. Z. was told on January 15th, 1900, "Records" pp. 62, 63: "Neither do we pretend to see all that goes on in the material . . . but on all the points on which we speak, we are cognisant of the truth, . . . our knowledge is *knowledge* and not conjecture." A similar claim was made by Stainton Moses' Guides.

(d) What Doctor<sub>p</sub> said to Hodgson on February 8th, 1899, about having been with him as a silent helper (Vol. XVI. pp. 376, 377) his predecessor with the same name asserted to Stainton Moses.

(e) Mrs. Piper's Band commended the character of Mr. Z.'s mother in terms which remind one of the high appreciation of Mrs. Speer's attitude expressed by Stainton Moses' Guides. See January 15th, 1900, "Records" page 64.

(f) The admonitions given to Hodgson about his failings recall the tendency of Stainton Moses' "Controls" to take him to task for similar infirmities of temperament. See "Records," February 20th, 1899, pp. 93, 94, and November 3rd, 1902, pp. 861 to 863.<sup>1</sup>

(g) On February 19th, 1902, "Records" pp. 208, 209,

<sup>1</sup> Hodgson was much impressed by the advice which he received from the "Controls." On January 30th, 1901, "Records" p. 30, he told them: "I believe that I feel that what you have already done for my spirit is worth more than all, even should God's guidance stop this communication and I should never hear from you again."

Rector<sub>P</sub> told Hodgson that Mrs. Piper harmed herself by teaching too much, and on Hodgson's expressing surprise admitted that he might be confusing her with Stainton Moses, who had injured his health in this way.<sup>1</sup> This statement may have originated from confusion of ideas produced by the sitter's knowledge of the case of Stainton Moses.

(24) The minor points unfavourable to the claim of identity are stated below:

(a) The style of conversation adopted by Mrs. Piper's "Controls" with sitters is sometimes quite out of keeping with the manner observed by Stainton Moses' Guides in addressing him. Perhaps such practices as the use of the second person singular and of "Sabbath" for Sunday with her, but not with him, may be attributed plausibly to the influence of the medium's mind. The same explanation will hardly fit such a contrast as is brought out in the conversation quoted in Vol. XXVIII. page 93, where Imperator<sub>P</sub> repeatedly addresses Hodgson as "Sir," using the word apparently in the obsequious and not the American sense. One cannot imagine Stainton Moses' Imperator talking in this way. For the strange use of "Sir" by Rector<sub>P</sub>, see also page 147 *id.* See also February 2nd, 1897, "Records" page 17, where Rector<sub>P</sub> uses the inappropriate expression, "Very truly yours."

(b) In 1897 "Records," on March 19th, page 172, and April 1st, page 2, Rector<sub>P</sub> excused himself for confused writing by alleging that it was difficult for him to express Imperator's<sub>P</sub> words. This attitude was quite different from that of Stainton Moses' Rector, who professed to be in perfect rapport with Imperator and to act with facility as his amanuensis, but to experience difficulty in understanding and expressing the thoughts of some other spirits who constituted "the Mystic Band." Perhaps some allowance

<sup>1</sup> This is the last of the references of the "Controls" to their association with Stainton Moses that I have noticed in looking through the records of Hodgson's period. In Vol. XXIII. page 235, Sir Oliver Lodge states: "Whatever relationship may exist between these personages and the corresponding ones of Stainton Moses, there is little or no identity . . . it would appear as if they did not very seriously pretend to be identical." It seems, therefore, probable that after Hodgson's time their claim to identity was dropped, or at any rate not asserted.

should be made for him in this matter, because the statement was made before he and Emperor<sub>p</sub> had developed properly; see paragraph 13.

(c) On June 29th, 1898, "Records" for May, page 358, Mrs. Piper gave a clairvoyant description of Emperor<sub>p</sub>: "Tall, looking like a priest, with no hair on his face. He was dressed in long flowing garments looking like soft white silk, and had a silver cross on his breast, hung by a cord . . . and had a halo about his head." This does not correspond with the description given of the prophet Malachi, who Stainton Moses' Emperor professed to be. See *Controls of Stainton Moses*.

(d) On January 11th, 1900, "Records" page 52, Hodgson was told: "In Moses' case we were unable to use the voice at all, or very vaguely"; and a similar statement was made to him on March 4th, 1901, page 174. As a matter of fact, Stainton Moses used to give trance addresses at séances, and his voice was freely used in this way by Emperor and other personages. This inaccuracy seems to me very important. The only explanations consistent with the claim of identity that occur to me as possible are either that the subliminal mind of Mrs. Piper distorted the statement, or that, as has sometimes been alleged in spirit communications, spirits using one medium are unable to recall their former experiences with another. Neither explanation seems satisfactory.

(e) In Vol. XXVIII. page 95, it is stated that Doctor<sub>p</sub> wrote a large and heavy script. Now the script used by Stainton Moses' "Doctor" was remarkably small and fine, requiring the use of a magnifying glass sometimes for facility in reading it. Perhaps this difference may be due to the difference of the medium, but the omission to refer to it and explain it is unsatisfactory.

(25) In my opinion a comparison of paragraphs 23 and 24 shows a balance against the claim to identity. The similarities noticed in paragraph 23 can be accounted for rather easily as due to coincidence or to the knowledge in the minds of the medium and the sitter. Even without these deductions their value is not high. It is more difficult to find satisfactory excuses for the inaccuracies set

forth in paragraph 24, and the points at issue are more definite as tests.

(26) The five "Controls" of Mrs. Piper who profess to have been Stainton Moses' Guides were Imperator<sub>p</sub>, Rector<sub>p</sub>, Doctor<sub>p</sub>, Prudens<sub>p</sub>, and Mentor<sub>p</sub>. His Guides bearing the same pseudonyms alleged to him that they had been the following persons in their lives on earth: Imperator, the Prophet Malachi; Rector, Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus near Rome; Doctor, the Stoic Philosopher Athenodorus; Prudens, the Neo-Platonist Plotinus; Mentor, the Arabian Ghazali or Algazzali. Mrs. Piper's "Controls" did not give the same account of themselves. From what Hyslop wrote in Vol. XVI. pp. 262 *et seq.*, they do not seem to have been much pressed on the subject of their past history, but to have been accepted as helpers on account of their successful management of the medium, a more important matter than their personality. To the few questions that were put to them about their earthly names, they gave answers that did not agree with the claims of Stainton Moses' Guides. Without laying too much stress on the statements made at an early stage of their development (see paragraph 13), I will merely say that the substitution of other names with Mrs. Piper for those which they had claimed with Stainton Moses can hardly be explained by forgetfulness of earth life or difference of mediums. If the personalities were really identical, the failure to get the right names through the medium might perhaps be intelligible, but no plausible excuse occurs to me for the invention of such wrong names as Dante, "Lidgates," Homer, and Ulysses. To pass on to later statements, Rector said in 1907 that his name had been Francis (see Vol. XXVIII. page 110). His ignorance of Latin (see page 110 *id.* and Vol. XXII. page 314, and Vol. XXVI. page 150) seems incompatible with the rôle of Hippolytus, who lived in Italy in the third century A.D. There is frequent reference to Plotinus in Vol. XXII. in connection with a cross-correspondence about a passage in his writings, and to Prudens as a trance personality of Mrs. Piper, but there is no recognition of any relation between the two, a significant omission.



(27) In paragraph 5 it has been stated that for the purpose of this article it is assumed that the "Controls" of Stainton Moses and Mrs. Piper respectively were spirits with independent existence, and not merely creations of the medium's subliminal mind. Summing up the case on this basis, I find that the internal evidence points to the two groups not having been identical. There are, it is true, slight resemblances, but they are either so vague as to be well within the sphere of coincidence where two good bands of controls are concerned, or they are of a nature to suggest an origin from the mind of Mrs. Piper or her sitter. On the other hand, the ignorance and the errors of her "Controls" concerning the earth-lives of the Guides of Stainton Moses whose names they bore, and concerning important features of his mediumship, are altogether inconsistent with their claim to identity. A considerable degree of oblivion might be excused, but the mistakes do more than weaken the case, they justify a finding that the claim is false. The force of this argument does not seem to be diminished if it is conceded that Stainton Moses' Guides may not have told him their right names of earthly life; for even so, if they had become attached to Mrs. Piper and claimed to have been associated with him, they would surely have adhered to their former stories and given correct accounts of his mediumship. There is only one difficulty which occurs to me in rejecting the claim. It is hard to see why spirits whose objects are good should tell lies about their antecedents. One conceivable explanation, of course, is that the "Controls" of Mrs. Piper had not independent existences, but were creations of her subliminal mind. Another is that they were separate spirits, and that they personated Stainton Moses' Guides, wishing to do good to the medium and sitters and feeling that this was the easiest way to obtain success, the end justifying the means. The doubt about this point is similar to the failure to discover a plausible motive for a crime, a failure which is not necessarily a bar to conviction.

(28) Hyslop's position, as far as I can understand it, may be noticed briefly. From his article in Vol. XVI., dated October 1901, he seems to have reserved his opinion

as to the personalities of Mrs. Piper's "Controls," but to have favoured the view that they were independent spirits, though there was no proof of identity (pp. 177 *et seq.*, 262-267). This seems to have been still his view in 1910 (see Vol. IV. of the *Proceedings* of the American S.P.R., pp. 189, 196). In the *American Journal*, Vol. X. page 265 (May 1916), he quoted Imperator's name as Malachi. There, and in Vol. XI. *id.* page 76 (1917), he argued that "Malachi," according to a certain Hebrew scholar, was not the name of a prophet at all, but a word for "messengers," a term by which Imperator<sub>p</sub> described himself and his Band, and that therefore it might be said that the same name was given through both mediums. In Vol. XI. page 76, however, he dropped this point, and continued: "The proper name that I have obtained for him through Mrs. Smead and Mrs. Chenoweth, and which also came through Mrs. Piper and Stainton Moses, is of a well-known historical character in the Christian Church of early times." I think that by Stainton Moses he must here mean Stainton Moses<sub>p</sub>, because the real Stainton Moses in his life-time left no record of any other name than Malachi for Imperator. He does not seem to have changed greatly his opinions of 1901, but to have become slightly more inclined to the theory of the identity of the two groups of "Controls," and not to have discussed the possibility of the Piper group being spirits external to her and falsely personating Stainton Moses' Guides.

In Vol. XI. of the *Journal* of the American S.P.R. is an article by Raynes supporting Hyslop's views against the opinions of Mrs. Sidgwick expressed in Vol. XXVIII. of the *Proceedings* of the English S.P.R. He apparently considers Julius Caesar<sub>p</sub> to be a "mischievous fool of a spirit" impersonating Julius Caesar (page 139). He criticizes Mrs. Sidgwick because she "nowhere entertains the possibility of spirit personation except in the vaguest possible way" (page 142). Hyslop, as I have stated above, has not dealt with this question in any of his writings that I have read. As Hyslop had so much experience of Mrs. Piper's mediumship, his views are of interest; but as he seems to have come to no conclusion on the question

of identity, I do not think it necessary to discuss them further.

(29) In paragraph 5 I have said that the question to be discussed is whether Mrs. Piper's "Controls" were identical with those of Stainton Moses, and not who or what they were if the answer to the question is in the negative. Perhaps, however, a few remarks on the light thrown by Hodgson's records on the nature and origin of the Band may be interesting to the readers of this article. There is at least a superficial appearance of personalities external to Mrs. Piper.

(a) The dialogue between the "Controls" and the spirits communicating through them with the sitter may, of course, be the result of dramatisation on the part of the medium's subliminal mind, but on some occasions it seems to offer convincing evidence of the presence of independent external personalities, *e.g.* on June 17th, "Records" pp. 691 *et seq.*, and November 10th, 1902, "Records" pp. 869 *et seq.* Two of Miss Pope's (Theodate) séances furnish support on other lines to this theory. On May 18th, 1904, "Records" page 786, she told G. P.<sub>p</sub> that Miss Porter's spirit had given much more evidential information than had John's spirit. This remark gives some reason for supposing that these two communicating spirits were different entities. On May 24th, 1905, "Records" pp. 22 *et seq.*, Miss Pope had a conversation with Rector<sub>p</sub> as to whether he got names from her mind by telepathy and whether he really had an existence separate from Mrs. Piper. To prove that he had powers of his own and was an independent spirit, he quoted some of her conversations with Hodgson about the sittings, and referred to the knowledge about absent persons which he was able to obtain by the use of "influences" (psychometry). He made out a plausible case.

(b) In pp. 264 to 266 of Vol. XXVIII. Mrs. Sidgwick has discussed the ignorance of Mrs. Piper's normal state professed by her "Controls." If they were really creations of her mind, their ignorance of the following matters is very difficult to understand: her correspondence about them in a newspaper, October 21st, 1901, "Records" pp. 347 *et seq.*; her mental attitude towards them, April 28th,

29th, 1902, "Records" pp. 460, 467; the death of her brother and the illness of her husband, October 26th, 1903, "Records" pp. 742 to 745; the interruption in the series of sittings due to her illness, January 6th, 1904, page 1; the death of her husband, June 27th, 1904, "Records" page 61; her physical condition (they had to have a sitting with her daughter Alta in order to get the information for the diagnosis of Mrs. Piper's case), November 1st, 3rd, 8th, 1904, pp. 273, 274, 319 to 320 (b), 332.

It is conceivable, no doubt, that in these cases the ignorance was not real, but was falsely alleged in order to support the claim to an independent existence. I do not see, however, why the "Controls" should wrongly disclaim the ability to exercise on Mrs. Piper the same powers which they professed to use on her sitters. Their knowledge of her condition, thoughts, and affairs would be regarded as the natural consequence of their association with her, and would not be considered inconsistent with their claim to be separate spirits.

(c) The "Controls" frequently prescribed for sitters present at the séances and for absent persons whose influences were psychometrised by them (see pp. 305 *et seq.* of Vol. XXVIII.). Doctor<sub>P</sub>, who made the diagnosis, did not profess to be Stainton Moses' "Doctor," but a deceased medical practitioner of modern date. How far his medical knowledge exceeded that possessed by the medium and the sitter, and whether the degree varied according to the sitter, are points on which I can give no opinion. The investigation might lead to valuable results if made by somebody sufficiently conversant with the qualifications of those concerned. There is one curious point, a sort of development of the theory of influences. On April 8th, 1904, "Records" page 587, Doctor<sub>P</sub>, after feeling Hodgson's chest, predicted that an absent person would die during the current season; pneumonia had been prophesied as the cause of her death, January 14th, 1903, "Records" page 41. On other occasions Hodgson's body was touched in the appropriate spot prior to the diagnosis of the case of an absent person.

(30) It may be that in both cases (Stainton Moses and

Mrs. Piper) the "Controls" had an element of external influence outside the scope of subliminal dramatisation, and depending on states of personality beyond the range of mundane experience. If this theory is correct, there may have been some connection between the two bands in links which cannot be appreciated by our intelligence. Except for the uncertainties entailed by such reflections, I cannot see in the material before me sufficient evidence of any closer connection than one would expect to find between any two groups of good "Controls," where the medium and a sitter with one group had the supraliminal knowledge about the other which Mrs. Piper and Hodgson had about the mediumship of Stainton Moses.